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ABSTRACT

This book integrates poetry and psychology to explore how people shape their childhood place memories and self-identities in conformity with their philosophies of nature. Drawing upon written work and original interviews, the book describes uses of memory through the perspectives of five contemporary American poets: William Bronk, David Ignatow, Audre Lorde, Marie Ponsot, and Henry Weinfield. In the book, these authors describe their relationships with nature and childhood in the context of major Western traditions on philosophy and religion. Each poet confronts the Western image of an alien nature within which histories of individuals are significant, and three poets elaborate alternative versions of connection with nature and their own past. The book closes by suggesting how the practice of psychology may assimilate principles of phenomenology and hermeneutics that point to a new paradigm of connection with childhood and with nature. After an introduction, chapters in the book are: (1) Placing the Past; (2) Childhood and Nature; (3) Confrontations: William Bronk and Henry Weinfield; (4) Reconciliation: David Ignatow; (5) Connections: Audre Lorde and Marie Ponsot; (6) Childhood and Nature Reconsidered; and (7) A Recollective Psychology. An epilogue concludes the book. (RS)

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